



08/05/2013
Attn: Greg Smith
King County Library System
960 Newport Way NW
Issaquah, WA 98027

RE: Entry Location at Renton Library

Dear Greg,

As part of the April 29, 2013 city Council meeting, there was a motion to have "...the architectural team consider adding a second door that opens from the entrance airlock area directly onto the bridge as part of the design." During our Design Development Phase, we have investigated the feasibility of this option; and our team's recommendation is for the library design to include one parking lot-facing entry, with no additional entry on the bridge side.

At the City Council meeting, we addressed the advantages behind locating the main entry on the parking lot side of the building:

Functionality: The entry facing the parking lot remains the best location for library functionality. This position allows for the staff workroom to be adjacent to the patron entry—and therefore the book drop. By enabling the majority of materials to be returned directly to the work room (and AMH), the library is able to increase the rate of material processing and improve staff ergonomics.

Safety and Accessibility: Locating the entry facing the parking lot improves the visibility of the entry from the parking lot (and vice versa). It also makes the building approach to be closer to the ADA parking stalls.

During the Council meeting we also noted the reasons why we would not recommend adding a second entry to the south façade:

Space utilization: Incorporation of a second entry along the south façade will add additional square footage devoted to circulation and vestibules. We agree with the community that gaining as much space as possible for library function is critical; and that maintaining views to the river is essential. As such, using this south-facing frontage for additional entry vestibule space would decrease the area usable for library space.

Security and monitoring: To help staff supervise the building one point of entry/exit is preferred. This allows staff members to keep an eye on visitors—as well as materials leaving the building. As the KCLS buildings do not have a security system per se, this is an important aspect of maintaining a safe building and minimizing material theft.

Lighting: Typically an entry is a well-lit area to provide safe and accessible access. If we locate the entry on the south façade, any light serving the entry is subject to the requirements for lighting over aquatic habitat per the Shoreline Master Program Regulations ("iii. Lighting requirements: Nighttime lighting shall be designed to avoid or minimize interference with aquatic life cycles through avoidance of light sources that shine directly onto the water. Exterior lighting fixtures shall include full cut-off devices such that glare or direct illumination does not extend into water bodies. Lighting shall include timers or

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other switches to ensure that lights are extinguished when not in use." We feel these requirements do not support the type of illumination that would be safe and appropriate for a main entry to a civic building.

The Council's motion specifically stated the team was to research the addition of a second door to the proposed entry airlock. In reviewing this option, we identified the following issues:

Code Compliance: Egress doors must comply with a number of code requirements, two of which are:
- ADA maneuvering clearances: Doors in a sequence must maintain specific separation distances. To be code compliant, doors must also provide code required ADA clearances for side and/or front approach. We looked at a number of ways to maintain these clearances, however, they resulted in significantly enlarging the airlock space.

- Path of travel requirements: projections into the path of travel (items such as doors, drinking fountains, wall mounted devices, etc) may not encroach into the path more than 50% of the required egress width. If the new south door and the interior airlock door are placed too close together, this becomes an issue.

Safe Access: A door in the south face of the airlock will create perpendicular paths of travel for users. This sets up the opportunity for traffic to be awkward--and potentially dangerous--if doors open into the opposing traffic flow without appropriate separation distances. While the code requirements mentioned above are necessary, they are also understood to be minimum standards rather than maximums. For this reason we also feel that two airlock doors would not be recommended based on the inability to achieve responsible distances between two perpendicular doors.

Renovation Tolerances: We typically approach renovations to existing structures knowing that building elements will inevitably be out-of-plumb, out-of-level, or not built exactly as documented in the original drawings. With this in mind, we typically detail renovations with ample tolerances to absorb the normal imperfections of existing conditions. Since doors that provide egress for more than 50 occupants must open in the same direction as exit access, these doors must open outward—meaning that the door panel and closer hardware would need to clear the underside of the steel bracing. As such, locating an entry door to slip under the south facade's required cross-bracing encroaches on the tolerances we feel are appropriate given our experience with renovation projects. Adding a door to the existing airlock, would be a tight fit under the required bracing.

For these reasons we recommend maintaining the proposed entry on the parking lot side of the building, and not pursuing an entry on the south-facing side. Please consider this our response to the council motion requesting our investigation of a south entry.

Please feel free to call with any questions.

Sincerely,



Ruth Baleiko, AIA
Principal, The Miller Hull Partnership, LLP